



**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

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News Release

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VA Awards \$2.7 Million for Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery ***Grant will expand the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery in Kona***

WASHINGTON – Continuing its mission of providing a final resting place for Hawaii veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced a \$2.7 million grant to expand the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery in Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii.

“This grant will ensure that Hawaii veterans continue to have the honor of a veteran’s burial without leaving their own island,” said Dr. James B. Peake, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. “This grant will help to keep that option available to serve the needs of Kona’s veterans well into the future.”

The 62-acre cemetery provides service for 7,000 veterans on Hawaii. The expansion will develop 288 in-ground cremation burial sites and 192 columbaria niches. The grant will provide 100 percent of the funding for the construction of in-ground cremation gravesites, columbaria, a storage facility with a fenced service yard, a road, landscaping, a memorial walk, an assembly area, a committal shelter, and supporting infrastructure to include utilities, landscaping and irrigation. The grant also includes design costs and equipment to operate the cemetery.

Hawaii Island has two other state veterans cemeteries, both in Hilo. The state of Hawaii has eight state veterans’ cemeteries. The other cemeteries are located in Kaneohe on Oahu, Hanapepe on Kauai, Makawao on Maui, Hoolehua on Molokai and Lanai City on Lanai.

VA’s State Cemetery Grants Program complements VA’s 125 national cemeteries across the country. The program helps states establish veterans cemeteries and expand or improve existing state cemeteries. To date, the VA program has helped establish 72 state veterans cemeteries in 38 states and U.S. territories that provided more than 23,000 burials in fiscal year 2007. Since the program began in 1980, VA has awarded 172 grants totaling \$344 million.

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Hawaii State Cemetery Grant 2/2/2

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the VA Web site on the Internet at <http://www.cem.va.gov> or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.

Information about Hawaii's state veterans cemeteries is available by calling the Hawaii Office of Veterans Services at (808) 433-0420 or on the Internet at <http://www.dod.state.hi.us/doddod/ovs/>.

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